Name of Banks	*Ranchi*	*Surat*	*Vadodara*
Indian Bank	1	1	1
Indian Overseas Bank	3	1	6
Punjab National Bank	1	-	-
Syndicate Bank	-	5	-
UCO Bank	1	1	1
Union Bank of India	5	4	8
United Bank of India	7	-	-
Vijaya Bank	-	-	1

(b) to (d). Under the extant Policy of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for opening of branches in rural areas, the lis of identified centres with necessary particulars in each district has to be given to the lead bank of that district. The lead bank after consolidating the list received from all banks submits it to the District Collector for recommendations and onward transmission to RBI through the concerned State Government. Under the Branch Licensing Policy (1990-95), opening of branches of Public Sector Banks is a continuous process and hence it is not possible to project the number of branches that will be opened in the rural areas of these districts.

[*English*]

Aid from Aid India Consortium

1396. SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the financial aid sought by India from Aid India Consortium;

(b) the amount sanctioned by the Consortium at its recent meeting; and

(c) the details of the projects for which the aid has been earmarked?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) It is not the practice for Government of India to make a specific request in terms of a precise figure of aid, as the India Consortium is a Group set up under the aegis of the World Bank to consider availability of aid to India in the context of the country's requirements.

(b) At the Aid India Consortium Meeting held on 19-20 September, 1991 the members of the Consortium pledged aid assistance of US $ 6.7 billion.

(c) The details of projects for which the aid is likely to be utilised will be determined after aid negotiations with each donor agency are finalised.

Trade Deficit

1397. SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN: SHRI SHIV SHARAN VERMA:

Will the Minister pf COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) India's trade deficit in terms of US dollars as on September 30, 1991;

(b) the corresponding figures for the previous three years; and

(c) the reasons for increase in deficit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). The details of trade deficit, in dollar terms, during the period April-September 1991 and corresponding period of 1990-1989 and 1988 are given below:

(Value: US$ Million)

Period	*Trade Deficit*
April-Sept.91	1021
April-Sept.90	2426
April-Sept.89	1916
April-Sept.88	3013

(c) As may be seen, the trade deficit at US$ 1021 million during April-September 1991 was lowest as compared to the corresponding period of previous three years.

Reward to Informants of Contraband Gold and Silver

1398. SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of the Government with regard to rewarding the informants of contraband gold and silver;

(b) whether the public is also given the same benefits as are given to the Customs officials; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). Members of the general public giving information leading to the seizure of contraband gold and silver are eligible for monetary reward upto a maximum of Rs. 500 per 10 grams of gold and Rs. 1000 per kg. of silver. However, such monetary rewards are purely ex-gratia payments and cannot be claimed as a matter of right. The competent authority deciding upon grant of amount as rewards has to keep in mind various factors such as the specificity and accuracy of the information, the risk and trouble undertaken, the extent and nature of help rendered by the informer, whether informations gives clues to persons involved in smuggling or their associates, etc.

Similarly, Government servants including Customs officials are also eligible for monetary rewards upto only the same limits. Here too, the amounts granted are ex-gratia payments and cannot be claimed as a matter of right. The authority competent to grant amounts as reward has to keep various factors in mind such as the risk involved to the Government servants in working out the case, the difficulty in securing the information, the extent to which the vigilance of the staff led to the seizure, special initiative, efforts and ingenuity displayed, etc. and whether, besides the seizure of contraband goods, the owners/organisers/financiers/racketeers as well as carriers have been apprehended or not.

Linking of National Highways Nos. 47 and 49 in Kerala

1399. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala